

Lead Generation: e-Intelligence™

The Scenario

A regional wholesaler, distributor and servicer of medical supplies and equipment was stuck in a flat sales cycle and needed to generate new activity.

The 10-year-old company operates through a decentralized sales force consisting of 14 representatives operating independently across three geographic regions with no formal lead or sales development processes in place from the corporate level. Sales executives conduct traditional in-person visits approximately every two weeks, supported by monthly flier specials and an annual catalog. The company's customer service team fulfills incoming calls.

ClearVision Strategic Marketing discovered an extensive client list within which few customers purchased beyond a single category. In addition, no effort had been made to identify unique market segments or to acquire e-mail addresses from its clients. Nor had a strategy or means been developed for two-way communication from the company level with their customer and prospect base; instead, all communication, relationship development and management relied solely on the decentralized sales force. While this created a strong customer-rep relationship, it prevented customers from feeling a strong connection to the company itself.

Few of the sales executives were connected electronically (i.e., through e-mail) to the organization on a regular basis, and most felt too busy to take on additional sales responsibilities.

The ClearVision Approach

Based on knowledge and understanding culled through development of a strategic marketing plan and interfacing directly with both the leadership team and the sales organization, ClearVision's executive counselors recognized significant untapped potential for the wholesaler in several areas:

- **Executing customer segmentation** would deliver more cost-effective marketing through tailored marketing programs and bring higher operating efficiencies by focusing resources on the most productive segments

- **Enhancing sales systems and management** would improve communication between the office and its decentralized sales force, obtaining and sharing market intelligence and facilitating solutions to identified challenges
- **Integrating customer service, marketing and sales** would not only improve efficiency but also cross-pollinate all segments with shared information and improve customer loyalty
- **Strengthening and focusing on "smart" lead generation** —gaining insight on each customer's readiness to purchase — would both expand and leverage the capacity of the sales team, ensuring ongoing introduction of fresh prospects into the customer rolls, further increasing corporate involvement with the customer
- **Introducing e-commerce strategies and measurements** would bring modern efficiencies to the sales cycle, offer new ways to reach out to customers and deliver direct intelligence on the comparative effectiveness of individual outreach efforts while also bringing the company up to speed with their competitors, many of whom had full e-commerce capabilities enabling fast, easy and efficient online purchases

ClearVision engaged the company's owner executives in an open conversation addressing the opportunities associated with alternative sales channels, integration of new process and migration to a new culture, all with the aim of generating the desired boost in equipment sales.

The ClearVision Solution

While the wholesaler was not ready to migrate to a fully web-based sales fulfillment channel, the owners did commit to a specially designed smart intelligence-gathering campaign that would integrate the sales/marketing/customer service process in order to obtain and prioritize qualified and equipment leads.

In response, ClearVision developed an e-Intelligence™ lead generation campaign with a focused theme, concepted response incentives and then designed an attention-grabbing, personalized, integrated direct

CASE STUDY

mail package supported by a micro-site with a unique domain name that provided web-based lead qualification.

The package was distributed to existing customers, most of whom in the past had purchased only low-margin disposable supplies or obtained service through the company. Messaging, creative materials and incentives for the campaign were designed specifically to appeal to the primary recipients. Spurred by strong campaign incentives, recipients went directly to the campaign website where key information was captured that would guide the company and its sales force in qualifying and prioritizing prospects, identifying readiness to buy, and building sales from each respondent based on past purchases, current needs and future expectations.

A major focus of the effort internally was roll-out and training for the sales force to guide them in shifting their approach. A new, integrated appointment setting and consultative sales process was designed and deployed as each customer responded to the campaign offer providing new information and intelligence. Incentives were put in place to reinforce the desired internal culture shift. For each lead generated, the company retrieved the respondents' qualified information in real time and developed customer-specific sales strategies.

The Outcome

The e-Intelligence, smart lead generation campaign introduced and managed by ClearVision brought the company a three-dimensional understanding of customers' needs, experience and expectations which had never been available under the previous sales approach. This brought a better understanding of its customers, revealed insight regarding their readiness to buy and increased the level of sophistication in its customer's interactions. It also strengthened the direct relationship between the customer and the company, enhancing long-term customer loyalty.

Specifically, the campaign had the following results:

- Of the qualified leads responding to the equipment campaign, a staggering 86 percent had never purchased equipment from the supplier, opening significant new avenues to growth
- Personal meetings were arranged with two-thirds of responding prospects
- ROI on this single campaign is estimated at 125 times development costs in addition to the many intangible benefits

Of the qualified leads responding to the equipment campaign, a staggering 86 percent had in the past purchased only low-margin disposable supplies or obtained service yet demonstrated a readiness to buy

- A new, integrated marketing/sales process was developed to provide long-term management and sales growth advantages
- Customer lists were acquired and confirmed, segmented and coded for measurement, future growth and efficiency
- Benchmark data was obtained at the customer and category levels that will provide ongoing payback over time by increasing understanding of customer needs and behavior
- Corporate-wide sales and customer service training strengthened the team and enhanced company-sales relationships
- An internal and external corporate culture shift began that will open new opportunities for growth by leveraging and sharing of internal resources and intelligence
- Customer e-mail addresses were obtained for future marketing and communication efforts

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ClearVision's proprietary e-Intelligence program helps qualify and prioritize prospects cost-effectively, supporting the launch of effective sales-driven campaigns based on customer-provided information in real time. For more information, contact us at 262.391.7868.